

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-11

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R 020953Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6191

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1337

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: AFM-PARTIES PACT: A FURTHER ASSESSMENT

REF: (A) LISBON 1268 (DTG 271232Z FEB 76), (B) LISBON 1279

(DTG 271532Z FEB 76)(NOTAL), (C) 75 LISBON 2069

(DTG 101724Z APR 76), (D) 75 LISBON 1952 (DTG 042321Z

APR 75)

SUMMARY: A COMPARISON OF THE AFM-PARTIES PACT WITH THE
DOCUMENT IT REPLACED UNDERSCORES THE GREATLY REDUCED POLITICAL
ROLE CONTEMPLATED FOR THE ARMED FORCES. THE REVOLUTIONARY
COUNCIL WILL AT MOST BE A COEQUAL PARTNER UNDER THE NEW
STRUCTURE. NONE OF THE PARTIES CURRENTLY FAVOR A COMPLETE
WITHDRAWAL OF THE MILITARY FROM POLITICS. THE DEMOCRATIC
PARTIES SEE THE PACT AS A WAY TO ENSURE ARMED FORCES' SUPPORT
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ESSENTIAL FOR STABILITY WHILE COMMITTING THE MILITARY

TO THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. END SUMMARY.

1. A COMPARISON OF THE AFM-PARTIES PACT SIGNED
FEB 26 WITH THE DOCUMENT IT REPLACED:

A. PREAMBLE: CURRENT PACT CONTAINS NO PREAMBLE. LANGUAGE IMPLYING BROAD POLITICAL ROLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, PROPOSED BY MELO ANTUNES AT ELEVENTH HOUR, WAS DROPPED IN FACE OF UNANIMOUS OPPOSITION FROM DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. PREVIOUS PACT CONTAINED ELABORATE PREAMBLE STATING BROAD POLITICAL OBJECTIVES AND ESTABLISHING AFM COMMISSION TO FACILITATE COOPERATION AMONG PARTIES AND GUIDE ASSEMBLY'S WORK IN ACCORD WITH AFM PROGRAM.

B. SOVEREIGN ORGANS: PRINCIPAL STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCE IS ELIMINATION OF AFM ASSEMBLY IN LATEST VERSION. CURRENT DOCUMENT, MOREOVER, CONTAINS NO REFERENCE TO ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT. OTHER MAJOR CHANGE IS GREATLY INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES GIVEN TO PRESIDENT.

C. PRESIDENT: UNDER NEW PACT, PRESIDENT WILL, FOR FIRST TIME, ENJOY POPULAR MANDATE. IN AREAS WHERE PRESIDENTIAL POWERS WERE PREVIOUSLY SUBJECT TO RC INITIATIVES OR APPROVAL, E.G., NOMINATION AND DISMISSAL OF PRIME MINISTER, DISSOLUTION OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, PRESIDENT NOW HAS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY. PRESIDENT IS ALSO GIVEN BROAD VETO POWER, ALTHOUGH VETO CAN BE OVERRIDDEN BY TWO-THIRDS VOTE OF ASSEMBLY.

D. REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL: NEW PACT GREATLY CONTRACTS POLITICAL ROLE OF COUNCIL. NO LONGER WILL IT:

-- DEFINE GENERAL LINES OF POLICY FOR GOVERNMENT;

-- DECIDE UPON CONSTITUTIONALITY OF LAWS AND OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS;

-- RATIFY LEGISLATION;

-- PROPOSE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.
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MOST IMPORTANT SPECIFIC POWER GIVEN RC IN CURRENT PACT IS A NEGATIVE ONE: ABILITY TO REQUIRE PRESIDENT TO EXERCISE VETO POWER. BUT ASSEMBLY CAN STILL OVERRIDE.

E. GOVERNMENT: CURRENT PACT ELIMINATES PREVIOUS REQUIREMENT FOR SPECIFIED MINISTERS (DEFENSE, INTERNAL, ADMINISTRATION, AND ECONOMIC PLANNING) TO HAVE CONFIDENCE

OF AFM. MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE, HOWEVER, IS ELIMINATION OF RC MANDATE TO DEFINE GENERAL LINES OF POLICY.

F. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY: BOTH PACTS SAY LITTLE ABOUT SPECIFIC POWERS OF ASSEMBLY. REDUCTION OF POWERS OF RC AND SUBORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT TO ASSEMBLY ENSURES ASSEMBLY WILL PLAY KEY ROLE UNDER CURRENT PACT.

G. TRANSITION PERIOD: INITIAL PACT PROVIDED FOR THREE-TO-FIVE YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD. NEW PACT PROVIDES FOR FOUR-YEAR TRANSITION IN WHICH CHANGES IN PACT OR CONSTITUTION CANNOT BE MADE WITHOUT RC APPROVAL.

2. COMMENT: THE FOREGOING COMPARISON UNDERSCORES GREATLY REDUCED POLITICAL ROLE CONTEMPLATED FOR ARMED FORCES UNDER NEW PACT. WHILE THE RC STILL RETAINS A FAIRLY BROAD FORMAL MANDATE -- INCLUDING GUARANTEEING FIDELITY TO THE SPIRIT OF THE APRIL 25, 1974 REVOLUTION -- ITS SPECIFIC POWERS HAVE BEEN GREATLY REDUCED. THE RC IS AT MOST A COEQUAL PARTNER UNDER THE NEW STRUCTURE, ALTHOUGH, AS POINTED OUT IN REF A, IT COULD DRAW UPON AMBIGUOUS LANGUAGE TO EXPAND ITS ROLE SHOULD THINGS GO BADLY FOLLOWING ELECTIONS. WHILE BOTH THE RC AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES INITIALLY ADOPTED TOUGH BARGAINING POSITIONS, THE FINAL VERSION OF THE PACT IS MORE THAN THE PARTIES EXPECTED TO GET, AND IN MOST CASES NOT FAR FROM THEIR ORIGINAL BARGAINING POSITIONS. NONE OF THE PARTIES FAVORED A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF THE MILITARY FROM POLITICS. THE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR SOMETIME ALLIES ON THE LEFT CONTINUE TO URGE A VANGUARD ROLE ON THE ARMED FORCES. THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES, ON THE OTHER HAND, RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR CONTINUED STRONG MILITARY SUPPORT TO GUARANTEE THE STABILITY NECESSARY TO GOVERN.

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THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES VIEW THE PACT AS A WAY TO ENSURE THIS SUPPORT WHILE ALSO COMMITTING THE MILITARY TO THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

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